

INTRODUCTION

The alternatives in this document establish broad overarching management guidelines. The general nature of the alternatives requires that the analysis of impacts also be general. This means that the National Park Service can make reasonable projections of likely impacts, but these are based on assumptions that may not prove to be accurate in the future.

As a result, this environmental impact statement is programmatic and presents an overview of potential impacts relating to each alternative. This environmental impact statement will serve as a basis for NEPA documents prepared to assess subsequent developments or management actions.

Impact topics were selected for analysis by determining which resources or elements of the human environment would be affected by alternative actions to address the planning issues and concerns described in the Purpose and Need section. Methods used to avoid or assess impacts are discussed below and in Appendix A. Those resources and environmental concerns that would not be appreciably affected by alternative actions were eliminated from further consideration and comparative analysis.

IMPACTS DISMISSED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION

The alternatives presented in this document will not have discernable negative impacts on the following resources, so these impact topics were dismissed from further consideration.

Floodplains and Wetlands

There would be no actions in floodplains or wetlands in any alternative. Preliminary site investigation for all actions has ensured that those resources can be avoided during implementation. In all alternatives involving removal or construction of docks in navigable waters, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and

Michigan Coastal Commission would be consulted for appropriate permits.

Air Quality

Temporary impacts on air quality could be caused by construction and demolition of facilities. These would primarily involve temporary increases in particulates (fugitive dust) and vehicle emissions (where motorized equipment is used). Mitigating measures (such as watering to keep dust down) would be taken to limit even temporary and localized impacts.

All alternatives would allow park managers and others to better understand and manage air quality. Included are research into suspected threats (consistent with the concept of Isle Royale being a laboratory or benchmark for wilderness), cooperative efforts with regional air quality ecosystem management and protection programs.

Vegetation and Soils

In each alternative, the total disturbance to vegetation and soils would be very minor (less than 10 acres) considering the size of the park. Most disturbance would take place in previously disturbed areas, further reducing the overall impact. Mitigation techniques would be used to reduce impacts to the minimum necessary to accomplish the objective. Mitigation would include careful site selection, salvaging topsoil and plant material, and rehabilitation of disturbed areas. Whenever facilities are proposed to be removed, the disturbed areas would be rehabilitated and revegetated with native plants.

Inventory work would be beneficial to the park's ability to manage these resources. Data gaps in the baseline information, particularly for rare plants and several animal species, would be filled and a better overall understanding of ecosystems would be attained.

Ethnographic Resources

No ethnographic resources have been identified in the park to date. If any ethnographic resources were identified the park would follow legal requirements and NPS policy to protect these resources.

Park Collections

None of the alternatives would impact the park's collections (museum artifacts, animal specimens, etc.). These are currently being stored and catalogued according to NPS curation standards and guidelines, and the facilities are anticipated to be adequate for the duration of this plan. No alternative would change the status of these resources.

Environmental Justice Policy (Executive Order 12898)

This order requires federal agencies to incorporate environmental justice into their missions by identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs and policies on minorities and low income populations and communities. The alternatives would have no such adverse effects.

- The developments and actions proposed in the proposed action would not result in any identifiable adverse human health effects. Therefore, there would be no direct or indirect negative or adverse effects on any minority or low-income population or community.

- The impacts on the natural and physical environment that occur due to implementation of the alternatives would not significantly and adversely affect any minority or low-income population or community.

- The alternatives would not result in any effects that would be specific to any minority or low-income community.

- The National Park Service has had an active public participation program and has considered all public input regardless of age, race, income status, or other socioeconomic or demographic factors.

- Consultations were conducted with Native Americans, and no negative or adverse effects were identified that disproportionately and adversely affect these minority groups.

- Impacts on the socioeconomic environment from the alternatives would be minor and would be confined mostly within the local and regional geographic area near the park. These impacts would not occur at one time but would spread over a number of years, thus mitigating their effects. Impacts on the socioeconomic environment are not expected to significantly alter the physical and social structure of the nearby communities.